

Dear Judge Wilken,

My name is Abigail Leight, and I am a former member of the Cal Poly Swimming and Diving Team. I respectfully submit this letter to formally object to the Injunctive Relief Settlement in *House v. NCAA, et al.* and to share the significant harm that Cal Poly's decision to cut its men's and women's swimming and diving teams has caused me personally and other athletes like me.

On March 7, 2025, Cal Poly announced the elimination of both its men's and women's swim and dive program. President Jeffrey Armstrong cited the NCAA House Settlement, the state budget, and financial uncertainty as justification for this decision. However, this explanation is misleading and unfairly shifts blame onto the Settlement instead of acknowledging the administration's choices. While many peer institutions chose not to opt into the Settlement, Cal Poly did — and then used it as a reason to eliminate Olympic sports that had a longstanding tradition of excellence and inclusivity on campus.

As a female diver, this decision stripped me of the opportunity to continue pursuing my sport at the Division I level — a sport I had dedicated much of my life to, balancing the demands of training, competition, and academics. Beyond losing access to the pool, locker rooms, and training facilities, the program's elimination deeply disrupted my college experience, my athletic development, and my mental health. The sudden removal of my team left me without the community, structure, and opportunities I relied upon to succeed both in and out of the classroom.

Cal Poly's actions also raise serious Title IX concerns. Women represent 51% of Cal Poly's undergraduate enrollment but only 38% of its athletic participation opportunities. Cutting a women's varsity program further exacerbates this disparity and reflects a disregard for gender equity. At the same time, Cal Poly chose to spend \$6.9 million annually on its football program while cutting swim and dive, which operated on a modest \$250,000 budget (with \$85,000 of that raised by athletes and families). Despite the team raising over \$9 million in pledges and gifts to save the program, the administration turned these offers down. This makes clear that the elimination of our team was not simply about finances but about misplaced priorities.

The decision to eliminate swimming and diving at Cal Poly harms female athletes by depriving us of meaningful opportunities to compete, train, and grow within collegiate athletics. The university's actions violate both the spirit and the letter of Title IX, and they undermine the importance of protecting Olympic sports that provide opportunities for student-athletes who are not represented in revenue-generating programs like football.

For these reasons, I respectfully object to the Injunctive Relief Settlement and urge the Court to consider its adverse impact on Olympic sports and gender equity. I hope my experience will underscore the importance of ensuring that schools like Cal Poly cannot use this Settlement as an excuse to eliminate opportunities for female student-athletes.

Thank you for your time and for considering my objection.

Respectfully,
Abigail Leight

17332 Burma St

NCAA ID #2211726851

Former Diver, Cal Poly Swim & Dive Team